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SCHOOL CELEBRATION AT SALEM.

A PRESS of matter has hitherto prevented us from noticing the school celebration at Salem, on the first of March last, on the occasion of occupying their new schoolhouses, and of the great enlargement of their provisions for Public Instruction. But as those portions of the exercises which we wish to record have a permanent value, no harm can accrue from this temporary delay.

The occasion was signalized by the presence of numerous visitors from Boston, Lowell, Roxbury, Charlestown, Danvers, Newburyport, and from several others of the towns which have taken a lead in improving their schools. They came to congratulate their fellow-citizens of Salem on the great advancement which has rewarded the efforts of the friends of education in that city; and all were compelled to acknowledge that, though Salem had started later in the race, yet she was no longer to be found by looking for her in the rear.

The company first visited the East schoolhouse,—a plan of which we gave in the 1st of March Number of our Journal, and which may be briefly described, as the most perfect schoolhouse in this country. Here they met the Mayor,—Mr. Phillips,—and the school committee of Salem; and, after inspecting all the arrangements and conveniences of the house, and making, no doubt, many a silent, as well as some audible comparisons, between its elegance, comfort, and adaptation to the purpose for which it was erected, and the dismal structures which, by the relation of contrast, rose up in their own memories, they repaired, at 11 o'clock, to the Mechanics' Hall, where sixteen hundred children, and not less than a thousand spectators of the animating sight, awaited their coming.

After a brief religious service, the exercises were introduced by a few remarks from the Mayor. Among other things, he said that the company were assembled "near the spot where were established the first church in America, and the first free school in the world."

During the morning, the following songs were sung by the children of the respective schools, and the following addresses made. The songs, considered without reference to their authorship, are not without considerable poetic merit; but we publish them, principally, because they were all composed by the children belonging to the Public Schools; and, in this respect, they are certainly remarkable. In preserving them, therefore, we enable other teachers to exhibit to their own pupils a specimen of the attainments of these. We detest the principle of emulation, when that powerful but degrading propensity is roused into activity, in regard to classmates and fellow-pupils of the same

class or school. But to emulate the attainments and the virtues of the aged or the distant, does not call into existence, nor give opportunity for the exercise of, those envious and selfish feelings, which are always awakened, and which often obtain the ascendancy, when that dangerous passion is roused, among children who sit upon the same forms, and are led to compare their respective attainments, at each successive recitation. Children, it is true, must, like men, be actuated by motives ; and we think, generally speaking, that that part of a teacher's duty which consists in supplying motives to exertion, in the minds of his pupils, is greatly neglected. Children will not study,—nor indeed will they do any thing,—without a motive. We might as well expect a gun to go off without being charged. The first duty of a teacher, then, is to excite a desire in the scholars to do their duty. Whatever of anecdote, of illustration, of fact, which increases the teacher's resources for this purpose, is of inestimable value to him ; and every teacher should be constantly on the lookout for every appropriate and interesting truth which may be used to enliven, to cheer, to stimulate, the minds of his scholars. Something new, and pleasant, and striking, and adapted to the capacities of the children, should be presented to them, every half day, so that they may feel that for every absence they lose a pleasure. The following songs, for instance, may be taught to children, and sung by them ; but that is not enough ; the teacher should inform his pupils that they were composed by children in their own State, perhaps in their own neighborhood, and not larger or older than themselves. The truths, also, presented and illustrated in the speeches which follow, may be modified in a hundred ways, and thus adapted to the capacities of all children. The power of a teacher, like the power of an orator, a poet, or a statesman, is increased in proportion to the extent and variety of his resources.

COME TO SCHOOL.

TUNE—“Come away, come away,” &c.

I.

Come to school, come to school, now, my merry little *girls*,—
 To our neat little school we will go ;
 If the sun be hot, or the sky be clear,—
 Though the wind does blow, and the storm is near,—
 To our school, to our school, now, my merry little *girls*,
 To our sweet little school we will go.

II.

Come to school, come to school, now, my merry little *boys*,—
 To our neat little school we will go ;
 To our books and our tasks with joy we will haste,
 Nor all our time in play will we waste,—
 But to school, but to school, now, my merry little *boys*,
 To our sweet little school we will go.

III.

Come to school, come to school, now, my merry *boys* and *girls*,—
 To our neat little school we will go ;
 Now we are young, our time we must spend
 Our minds to improve, and our hearts to amend.
 Then to school, then to school, now, my merry *boys* and *girls*,—
 To our sweet little school we will go.

THE PATH OF LEARNING.

TUNE—"The Might with the Right."

I.

By kindness led, the path we tread
 Of learning's flowery way ;
 And pleasures sweet our footsteps greet,
 As onward still we stray.
 On let us press, until success
 Our labors crown, our efforts bless.
 For the day shall yet appear,
 When the mind, right inclined, the world shall free ;
 "And come what there may
 To stand in the way,
 That day the world shall see."

II.

Our friends take heed to all our need,
 To make our duty plain ;
 Each needful aid is promptly made,
 To cheer us and sustain.
 On let us go, and fully show,
 Their love we feel, their wishes know.
 And to them it shall appear,
 That the mind, right inclined, the world shall free ;
 "And come what there may
 To stand in the way,
 That day the world shall see."

III.

Our country wide now views, with pride,
 A generation rise,
 With every source, with every force,
 To make us good and wise.
 On let us press, until success
 Their hopes fulfil, their wishes bless.
 And then it will appear,
 That the mind, right inclined, the world shall free ;
 "And come what there may
 To stand in the way,
 That day the world shall see."

ODE.

TUNE—"Hail! Columbia."

I.

Grateful hearts inspire our lays,
 While our native land we praise,—
 Land where children are so blest,
 Land where children are so blest,
 Where light and truth are on us shed,
 To teach us virtue's path to tread.
 The friends of children call us here,—
 And we, at their command, appear

To promise we'll deserve to claim
 Those patriot sires who live in fame.
 We would ever, ever be,
 Like our fathers, called "the free,"—
 Men who left to us, unstained,
 The republic they had gained.

II.

Such republic is our school,
 Wisdom there shall safely rule ;
 From the rebel's way we'll turn,
 From the rebel's way we'll turn,
 And range ourselves, a "patriot band,"
 'Neath our teacher's firm command.
 Calm *reproof* or grateful *praise*
 Equally his love displays ;
 He shall guide us as a friend,
 Till youth shall into manhood blend.
 We would ever, ever be,
 Like our fathers, called "the free,"—
 Men who left to us, unstained,
 The republic they had gained.

KNOWLEDGE EVERY WHERE.

I.

Knowledge opens, opens all around ;
 Its rich treasures wide unfolding,
 To the mind its lurements holding,—
 Knowledge opens, opens all around.

II.

Learning points us, points us every way ;
 To the heavens majestic turning,
 Sun and stars in splendor burning,—
 Learning points us, points us every way.

III.

High it lifts, it lifts our wondering minds ;
 To the Author of our being,
 Wise, Omnipotent, All-seeing,—
 High it lifts, it lifts our wondering minds.

IV.

Knowledge tempts us, tempts us every where ;
 In the blast it wildly rushes,
 In the blossoms sweetly blushes,—
 Knowledge tempts us, tempts us every where.

V.

Infinite its sources, all around ;
 On the ocean proud it rideth,
 In the earth's dark caves it hideth,—
 Infinite its sources, all around.

VI.

Turn we where we will, lo, it is there ;
 To the lightning's path it soareth,

In the thunder's voice it roareth,—
Turn we where we will, lo, it is there.

VII.

Let its influence, then, our souls possess ;
Every mind with pleasure filling,
Every evil passion stilling,—
Let its influence, then, our minds possess.

THE SCHOOL SONG.

I.

Come, come, though it storms, we'll away to the school ;
What though through these months the cold Winter has rule ?
Our heads will be sheltered, our feet will be warm,
And we shall be kept from the way of all harm.
And we shall be kept from the way of all harm.

II.

Nor these blessings alone ; there is food for the mind
In the Halls of Instruction, provided so kind ;
Through all seasons alike, there's enough and to spare,
Nor hunger nor thirst can ever come there.
Nor hunger, &c.

III.

But turn and seek knowledge where Wisdom sits queen,
In the place of the paths, with a look all serene !
Hear her voice as she cries to the simple and poor,
“ I have gold, I have riches that ever endure.”
I have gold, &c.

IV.

“ I have builded my house ; turn ye in at my gate,
Come sit at my feet, where the wise have all sat ;—
Who seek me betimes, they shall eat of my bread,
And drink of my cup from a pure fountain fed.”
And drink, &c.

GEORGE B. EMERSON and G. F. THAYER, Esqs., of Boston, being introduced by the Mayor, successively addressed the children as follows :—

Mr. Emerson said,—

“ I congratulate you, my young friends, on this happy event. This pleasant day is like a smile of Heaven upon this occasion ; and I believe Heaven always smiles on events like this. Many of us whom you see here have come from a distance, on the invitation of your excellent friend the Mayor, to show the interest which we feel in you, and in what has been done here for your improvement. We have taken great pleasure in looking over the buildings prepared for your use, the admirable arrangements and apparatus, so much superior to what is usually enjoyed by children in your position. We have been pleased to hear of the faithful teachers that are provided for you, and the excellent plan of your studies, and the excellent regulations.

“ Your fathers and friends have spared no pains to furnish you with all the best means and opportunities for learning. They now look to

you to do your part. All that they have done will be of no avail, unless you are excited to exert yourselves,—to prove yourselves worthy of these great advantages.

“ I was gratified, in looking over the regulations, to see the course marked out for you,—to see the stress laid upon the great substantials of a good education,—to see the prominent place given to that most useful art, that most graceful accomplishment, *reading*. You cannot, my young friends, realize the great and manifold advantages of gaining, now, in the beginning of your life, familiarly and perfectly, the single power of reading distinctly, naturally, intelligently, with taste and interest,—and of acquiring a *love* for reading. There is no situation in life, in which it will not prove to you a source of the purest pleasure and highest improvement.

“ For many years, and many times in a year, I have passed by the shop of a diligent, industrious mechanic, whom I have often seen busy at his trade, with his arms bare, hard at work. His industry and steadiness have been successful, and he has gained a competency. But he still remains wisely devoted to his trade. During the day, you may see him at his work, or chatting with his neighbors. At night, he sits down in his little parlor, by his quiet fireside, and enjoys the company of his friends. And he has the most extraordinary collection of friends that any man in New England can boast of. William H. Prescott goes out from Boston, and talks with him about Ferdinand and Isabella. Washington Irving comes from New York, and tells him the story of the wars of Grenada, and the adventurous voyage of Columbus, or the Legend of the Sleepy Hollow, or the tale of the Broken Heart. George Bancroft sits down with him, and points out on a map, the colonies and settlements of America, their circumstances and fates, and gives him the early history of liberty. Jared Sparks comes down from Cambridge, and reads to him the letters of Washington, and makes his heart glow with the heroic deeds of that godlike man for the cause of his country. Or, if he is in the mood for poetry, his neighbor Washington Allston, the great painter, steps in and tells him a story,—and nobody tells a story so well,—or repeats to him lines of poetry. Bryant comes, with his sweet wood-notes, which he learnt among the green hills of Berkshire. And Richard H. Dana, father and son, come, the one to repeat grave, heart-stirring poetry, the other to speak of his *two years before the mast*. Or, if this mechanic is in a speculative mood, Professor Hitchcock comes to talk to him of all the changes that have befallen the soil of Massachusetts, since the flood and before ; or Professor Espy tries to show him how to predict a storm. Nor is his acquaintance confined to his own country. In his graver hours, he sends for Sir John Herschel from across the ocean, and he comes and sits down and discourses eloquently upon the wonders of the vast creation,—of all the worlds that are poured upon our sight by the glory of a starry night. Nor is it across the stormy ocean of blue waves alone that his friends come to visit him ; but across the darker and wider ocean of time, come the wise and the good, the eloquent and the witty, and sit down by his table, and discourse with him as long as he wishes to listen. That eloquent blind old man of Scio, with beard descending to his girdle, still blind, but still eloquent, sits down with him ; and, as he sang almost three thousand years ago among

the Grecian isles, sings the war of Troy or the wanderings of the sage Ulysses. The poet of the human heart comes from the banks of Avon, and the poet of Paradise from his small garden-house in Westminster; Burns from his cottage on the Ayr, and Scott from his dwelling by the Tweed;—and, any time these three years past, may have been seen by his fireside a man who ought to be a hero with schoolboys, for no one ever so felt for them; a man whom so many of your neighbors in Boston lately strove in vain to see,—Charles Dickens. In the midst of such friends, our friend the leather-dresser lives a happy and respected life, not less respected, and far more happy, than if an uneasy ambition had made him a representative in Congress, or a governor of a State; and the more respected and happy that he disdains not to labor daily in his honorable calling.

“ My young friends, this is no fancy sketch. Many who hear me know as well as I do, Thomas Dowse, the leather-dresser of Cambridgeport, and many have seen his choice and beautiful library. But I suppose there is no one here who knows a neighbor of his, who had in his early years the same advantages, but who did not improve them;—who never gained this love of reading, and who now, in consequence, instead of living this happy and desirable life, wastes his evenings in low company at taverns, or dozes them away by his own fire. Which of these lives will you choose to lead? They are both before you.

“ Some of you, perhaps, are looking forward to the life of a farmer,—a very happy life, if it be well spent. On the southern side of a gently sloping hill in Natick, not far from the place where may be still standing the last wigwam of the tribe of Indians of that name, in a comfortable farm-house, lives a man whom I sometimes go to see. I find him with his farmer’s frock on, sometimes at the plough-tail, sometimes handling the hoe or the axe; and I never shake his hand, hardened by honorable toil, without wishing that I could harden my own poor hands by his side in the same respectable employment. I go out to look with him at trees, and to talk about them; for he is a lover of trees, and so am I; and he is not unwilling, when I come, to leave his work for a stroll in the woods. He long ago learnt the language of plants, and they have told him their history and their uses. He, again, is a reader, and has collected about him a set of friends, not so numerous as our friend Dowse, nor of just the same character, but a goodly number of very entertaining and instructive ones; and he finds time, every day, to enjoy their company. His winter evenings he spends with them, and in repeating experiments which the chemists and philosophers have made. He leads a happy life. Time never hangs heavy on his hands. For such a man we have an involuntary respect.

“ On the other side of Boston, down by the coast, lived, a few years ago, a farmer of a far different character. He had been what is called fortunate in business, and had a beautiful farm and garden in the country, and a house in town. Chancing to pass by his place, some four or five years ago, I stopped to see him. And I could not but congratulate him on having so delightful a place to spend his summers in. But he frankly confessed that he was heartily tired of it, and that he longed to go back to Boston. I found that he knew nothing about his trees, of which he had many fine ones,—for it was an old place he

had bought,—nor of the plants in his garden. He had no books, and no taste for them. His time hung like a burden on him. He enjoyed neither his leisure nor his wealth. It would have been a blessing to him if he could have been obliged to exchange places with his hired men, and dig in his garden for his gardener, or plough the field for his ploughman. He went from country to town and from town to country, and died, at last, weary and sick of life. Yet he was a kind man, and might have been a happy one but for a single misfortune ; he had not learned to enjoy reading. The love of reading is a blessing in any pursuit, in any course of life ;—not less to the merchant and sailor than to the mechanic and farmer. What was it but a love of reading which made of a merchant's apprentice, a man whom many of you have seen and all have heard of, the truly great and learned Bowditch ?

“ Our friends the young ladies may not think this which I have said exactly suited to them. But to you, my young friends, even more than to your brothers, is it important now to acquire a talent for reading well, and a taste for reading. I say *more important*, for, looking forward to the future, you will need it more than they. They are more independent of this resource. They have their shops, and farms, and counting-houses to go to. They are daily on change. They go abroad on the ocean. The sphere of woman, her place of honor, is home, her own fireside, the cares of her own family. A well-educated woman is a sun in this sphere, shedding around her the light of intelligence, the warmth of love and happiness.

“ And by a well-educated woman I do not mean merely one who has acquired ancient and foreign languages, or curious or striking accomplishments. I mean a woman who, having left school with a firmly-fixed love of reading, has employed the golden leisure of her youth in reading the best English books, such as shall prepare her for her duties. All the best books ever written are in English, either original or translated ; and in this richest and best literature of the world she may find enough to prepare her for all the duties and relations of life. The mere talent of reading well, simply, gracefully,—what a beautiful accomplishment it is in woman ! How many weary and otherwise heavy hours have I had charmed into pleasure by this talent in a female friend. But I speak of the higher acquisition, the natural and usual consequence of this, a taste for reading. This will give a woman a world of resources.

“ It gives her the oracles of God. These will be ever near her ;—nearest to her hand when she wakes, and last from her hand when she retires to sleep. And what stores of wisdom, for this world and for a higher, will she gain from this volume ! This will enable her to form her own character and the hearts of her children. Almost every distinguished man has confessed his obligations to his mother. To her is committed the whole formation of the character,—mind, heart, and body, at the most important period of life. How necessary, then, is it that she should possess a knowledge of the laws of the body and the mind ! and how can she get it but by reading ? If you gain only this, what an unspeakable blessing will your education be to you !

“ I need not, my young friends, speak of the other acquisitions you may make,—of writing, which places friends in the remotest parts of

the world side by side,—or of calculation, the very basis of justice and honesty.

“ The acquisitions you may make will depend chiefly on yourselves. You will find your teachers ready to lead you on to higher studies whenever you are prepared to go.

“ These excellent establishments are emphatically yours. They are raised for your good ; and, as we your seniors pass away,—and in a few years we shall have passed,—these buildings will become your property, and your children will fill the seats you now occupy. Consider them yours, then, to enjoy and profit by, but not yours to waste. Let it be your pride to preserve them uninjured, unmarred by the mischievous knives and pencils of vulgar children. Unite for this purpose. Consider an injury done to these buildings as an injury done to yourselves.

“ There is another thing which will depend on you, of more importance than any I have spoken of. I mean the tone of character which shall prevail in these schools. Your teachers will be happy to treat you as high-minded and generous children. Show that you can be so treated ;—that you are such.

“ Let me congratulate you upon the happy auspices of the name of him under whom, with the zealous coöperation of enlightened and patriotic associates, this momentous change in your school system has been effected,—a name which is borne by the oldest and best school in New Hampshire, and by one of the oldest and best in Massachusetts. It will depend upon you, my friends, to make the schools of Salem, equally, or still more distinguished, among those of the State.”

Mr. Thayer said,—

“ Children : I did not expect that I should have the privilege of addressing you, on this most joyful occasion ; for it was not till I met your respected Mayor, an hour ago, at the beautiful schoolhouse we have just left, that I received an invitation to do so. You will not, therefore, anticipate a studied discourse, or any thing particularly interesting. Devoted, however, as my life is, and has long been, to the instruction and guidance of the young in no inconsiderable numbers, I shall, without further preface, imagine myself in the midst of my own school, and talk familiarly to you as I would, and do, to them.

“ And allow me to add my congratulations to those of your other friends, for the ample, beautiful, and convenient arrangements that have been made for you, in the schoolhouses of this city ; and especially in the new one we have just examined. I can assure you, it is superior in almost every respect to any public schoolhouse in New England, if not in the United States. It, with others in the city, has cost your fathers and friends a great deal of money, which they have cheerfully expended, as a means of making you wise and good. But you have incurred a great debt to them, which you can never repay while you are children, but must endeavor to do it to your children, when you shall become men and women, and take the places of your parents in the world. But before that period, you can do something. Now, immediately on entering upon the enjoyment of the precious privileges extended to you, you can acknowledge the debt, evince the gratitude you feel, not by *words*, but *deeds* ;—by, (to use an expression

well understood by all children,) ‘*being good.*’ Yes,—by ‘*being good* and doing good;’—by obedience to parents and teachers; by kindness to brothers and sisters, and all your young friends and companions; by fidelity in duty, at home and at school; by the practice of honesty and truth at all times; by refraining from the use of profane and indecent language; by keeping the mind and heart free from every thing impure. These are the means in your own hands. Fail not to use them; and, although they will in fact be merely an acknowledgment of your obligation for the boon you possess, your friends will consider themselves well repaid for all they have done for you. It is from such conduct that the teacher’s, as well as the father’s, richest reward and highest satisfaction are derived. To see the beloved objects of our care and instruction appreciating our labors, and improving in all that is good and useful, under our management, affords the greatest happiness, lightens the heavy load of toil, relieves the aching head, and revives the fainting spirit.

“ There is, however, one great danger to which you,—to which all the young,—are specially exposed. I mean the influence of bad example. Example is omnipotent. Its force is irresistible to most minds. We are all swayed, more or less, by others. Others are swayed by us. And this process is continually going on, even though we are entirely unconscious of it ourselves. Hence we see the importance of choosing good companions, and flying from the bad. Unless this is done, it will be in vain for your friends to give you wise counsel, or for you to form good resolutions. ‘Who can touch pitch and be clean?’ You will resemble those with whom you associate. You will catch their words, their manners, their habits. Are they pure, you will be pure. Are they depraved, they will corrupt you. Be it a rule with you, then, to avoid those who are addicted to practices that you would be unwilling your most respected friends should know, and regulate your own conduct by the same standard.

“ I would particularly caution you against *beginnings.* It is the *first step* that is the dangerous one; since it is obvious that, if you were to ascend the highest mountain, it could only be done by a step at a time, and if the first were not taken, the summit could never be reached. But, one successfully accomplished, the next follows as a matter of course. And equally and fatally sure is the *downward* track to crime and misery! If we suffer ourselves to be drawn in *that* direction, what human power can save us from destruction? This danger, too, is increased by the feeling of security we indulge, when we say, ‘It is only a *little* thing; we shall never commit any great fault;’—not remembering that nothing stands still in life, in character, any more than in the material universe. We must be going forward or backward; up, towards improvement and glory,—or down, towards infamy and woe! Every thing accumulates, according to its kind; though it begin small, like the snowball you hold in your hand, it becomes, as you roll it on the ground before you, larger at every revolution, till, at last, it is beyond your power to move it at all.

“ I will illustrate this by a sad case which has recently occurred in Boston. But first, I wish to interest you in something of an agreeable nature, in connection with the faithful performance of duty.

“ I have spoken of some things that you should do, to show your

sense of the benefits which have been conferred upon you, and I should like to dwell on each one of them separately ; but I shall have time only to speak of one. It is, however, among the most important. I allude to *speaking the truth*,—the most substantial foundation of moral character. It has innumerable advantages, one of which is strikingly exhibited in the following story :—

“ Petrarch, an eminent Italian poet, who lived about five hundred years ago, secured the confidence and friendship of Cardinal Colonna, in whose family he resided in his youth, by his candor and strict regard to truth.

“ A violent quarrel had occurred in the family of this nobleman, which was carried so far, that resort was had to arms. The cardinal wished to know the foundation of the affair ; and, calling all his people before him, he required each one to bind himself by a solemn oath, on the Gospels, to declare the whole truth. None were exempt. Even the cardinal’s brother submitted to it. Petrarch, in his turn, presenting himself to take the oath, the cardinal closed the book, and said, ‘ *As for you, Petrarch, your word is sufficient!* ’

“ What more delightful reward could have been presented to the feelings of the noble youth than this, from his friend, his master, and one of the highest dignitaries of the church ? Nothing but the peaceful whispers of his own conscience, or the approbation of his Maker, could have given him more heart-felt satisfaction. Who among you would not be a Petrarch ? and, in this respect, which of you could not ?

“ While, then, I would hold up for imitation this beautiful example, I would present a contrast as a warning to you.

“ There is now confined in the Boston jail a boy of fourteen years of age, who, for the previous six years, had been sinking deeper and deeper into vice and crime, until last October, when he was convicted, and sentenced to two years’ confinement within the cold, damp cell of a gloomy prison, for aggravated theft. In his own written account of his life, which I have seen, he says that he began his wretched course by playing truant from school. His second step was *lying*, to conceal it. Idle, and destitute of any fixed purpose, he fell in company with others, guilty like himself, of whom he learned to steal, and to use indecent and profane language. He sought the worst boys he could find. He became a gambler, a frequenter of the circus and the theatre, and engaged in various other corrupt and sinful practices. At length, becoming bold in his dishonesty, he robbed the post-office of letters containing very considerable sums of money, and was soon detected and condemned. If you were to visit that abode of misery, you might often see this boy’s broken-hearted mother, weeping, and sobbing, and groaning, at the iron grating of his solitary cell, as if she would sink on the flinty floor, and die ! ‘ And all this,’ (to use the boy’s own words,) ‘ comes from playing truant ! ’

“ Look, then, my young friends, on these two pictures,—both taken from life,—and tell me which you like best ; and which of the two characters you propose to imitate. Will you be young Petrarchs, or will you adopt the course of the unfortunate boy in Boston jail ? They are both before you. If you would be like the former, *begin right*. Resist temptation to wrong-doing, with all your might. Let no one entice you from the way which conscience points out.

"This precept is applicable to all,—to both sexes and every age. Let me, then, I pray you, when I shall inquire, hereafter, respecting the habits and characters of the children of the Public Schools of Salem, have the satisfaction to hear, that the instructions of this occasion made an impression on their minds favorable to truth and duty, which subsequent time could never efface."

The children were then addressed by LEWIS G. PRAY, Esq., of Boston, in an appropriate and beautiful manner; but we have not been able to obtain a copy of his remarks.

In the afternoon, the Mayor made a powerful and elaborate address to the citizens, occupying about two hours and a half,—in which he described the condition of the schools as they existed two years ago, the extent and character of the improvements made, the plan of regulations prepared for their future government, &c. &c. But it would be impossible for us to give the whole of this speech, and unjust to him to give a mere abstract of it.

Thus passed a glorious day for the city of Salem,—one which will be forever commemorated in the annals of her Public Schools, as *the first day of March, New Style.*

DIDN'T I DRUM WELL?

[From the *Cultivator.*]

Many of your readers, doubtless, have read the anecdote of the justly-celebrated merchant of Boston, Billy Gray, as he was familiarly called; but lest all your readers may not have seen it, I will take the liberty to give the substance of it here. When Mr. Gray was somewhat advanced in years, he was one day superintending a piece of carpenter's work,—for nothing about him was permitted to escape his vigilant eye,—and he had occasion to reprimand the man who was performing it for not doing his work *well*. The carpenter turned upon him,—he and Billy having been known to each other in their youth,—and said, "Billy Gray, what do you presume to scold me for? You are a rich man, 'tis true; but didn't I know you when you were nothing but a drummer?" "Well," said Mr. Gray, "didn't I drum *well*,—eh? didn't I drum *well*?" The carpenter was silenced, and went on to do his work better, agreeably to Billy's orders. Billy Gray commenced his career a poor boy, and began early, and continued through his long life, to act on the principle of always *drumming well*;—or, in other words, of doing every thing as it ought to be done, and not by halves; and the result was, that he died worth his millions of dollars.

BRIEF RULES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF ALL WHO WRITE FOR NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PERIODICALS.—Write legibly. Make as few erasures and interlineations as possible. In writing names of persons and places, be more particular than usual to make every letter distinct and clear,—also, in using words not English. Write only on one side of the paper. Employ no abbreviations whatever, but write out every word in full. Finally, when you sit down to write, don't be in a hurry. Consider that hurried writing makes slow printing.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES.

[From the Boston Courier.]

We perceive, by the journal of the Legislature, that a bill has passed concerning the powers of school committees. What the peculiar provisions of the bill are, we know not; but we hope that it *extends* the power of school committees in relation to the attendance of pupils. They ought to have power to compel constant attendance, except in cases of sickness, or to prohibit attendance under other circumstances. The irregularity of the attendance of scholars is a sore evil. The number of parents is not few, who permit their children to exercise their own pleasure, to attend school when it suits their whim or convenience, and to stay away whenever a nonsensical and frivolous excuse can be trumped for the occasion. We *know* of some children who, though nominally *annual* scholars, do not attend enough to make more than four or five months' attendance in the year. Such children learn little or nothing, and are a manifest injury to the school. Why should a man enjoy the power of retarding the progress of fifty scholars by permitting his own children to be out on fishing and shooting frolics, or to see a muster or some sort of a useless show, when they ought to be at school?

Concerning the powers and duties of school committees, we think that the Secretary of the Board of Education could not perform a more useful or acceptable service, than by reducing all the laws on this subject to an epitome, that should present the whole of their requirements at one view. Such an article would not occupy more than a page or two of the School Journal, and would be a most valuable assistant to committees, whose duties are irksome enough even to the best qualified, and are difficult to be properly learned and understood by most of those on whom the task usually falls.

[We have been glad to see that, from time to time, the Courier has called the attention of the public to the enormous evil of irregular attendance at school. We have heretofore said so much on this unjust and spendthrift habit of our people that, (to use an Irishism,) any thing new we could say, would be only repetition. (See our Fourth Annual Report to the Board of Education, pp. 65—75; same, 3d vol. Common School Journal, pp. 340—47, *et passim*, through the pages of the Journal.) We wish all the papers in the State would take up the subject, and din it in the ears of neglectful and wicked parents, until, if they would not hear us because we are their friends, they would for our importunity. Many school committees have passed very strict by-laws in relation to this *offence*,—for it deserves no milder name,—and these, in most cases, have been found to work well. We cannot describe, in words, the loss, mischief, and vexation, which inevitably ensue, from causing or allowing children to be absent from, or tardy at, school; we want a new language to denote them,—some algebraic signs expressive of vast, unknown quantities;—and the conduct of some parents on the subject is so heedless, or, rather, heinous, as would almost reconcile one to seeing the whole algebraic formula worked out, with a hickory pointing-rod,—using, as a black-board for the purpose, all that part of their anatomy which lies between the *scapula* and the *os femoris*.

During one of the evenings of the last month, a large public meeting, on the subject of absence, and tardiness, and kindred evils, was held in the city of Salem, which was addressed by the Mayor; and, after the address, a resolution was passed, pledging the aid of the citizens to mitigate or remove them.

In regard to the suggestion of the Courier, that it would be useful to publish, in our Journal, all the laws prescribing the duties of school committee men, we would remark that we have already done so. In the 7th Number of our 1st volume may be found all the provisions relating to the duties of school committees, which were then in force. The only alteration in these duties, since made, is that of making the annual returns to the Secretary of State on or before the last day of April, in each year, instead of the first day of May.]

MASSACHUSETTS NORMAL SCHOOLS, AND SOUTHERN MILITARY SCHOOLS.

We copy a few paragraphs from the *South Carolinian*, a paper printed at Columbia, S. C., to show in what direction the current of opinion sets among our southern brethren, on the subject of schools. The article is headed "*Military Schools in Virginia.*"

"It will be seen by the following remarks of the *Richmond Enquirer*, that the Legislature of Virginia, encouraged by the decided success of the experiment, of converting the State arsenal and guard at Lexington into a military school, are about to devote the arsenal and guard at Richmond to the same admirable purpose.

"It will be recollect, that the highly-beneficial results of the experiment at Lexington induced the introduction of a bill into the House of Representatives of our Legislature, at its last session, to convert the State Arsenal and Guard at this place into a similar school; and that it was referred to the military committee, favorably reported on, and passed by the House. In the Senate, to our great regret, it failed,—being, if we recollect rightly, laid on the table, at a late period of the session, in consequence, if we mistake not, of a difference of opinion about including the State Arsenal and Guard in Charleston, and the general pressure of the business of the session. That both of our State arsenals will ultimately be converted into military schools, we feel assured,—satisfied as we are that this noble purpose is fraught with extensive public and private benefit, without any thing of evil to detract from it;—and it is deeply to be regretted that it was not commenced at the last session. The bill which passed the house provided, that the \$8000 now appropriated for the arsenal in Columbia, should be appropriated for the support of a military school there; that the commissioners of Free Schools in each district should send there one of the most promising of their pupils, not under the age of fourteen years, with the sum of —, (we forget with what sum the blank was filled in the house,) annually, out of their portion of the Free School fund; that any person not under the age of fourteen might, with the consent of the governor, enter and enjoy all the benefits of said school, on paying \$100 annually; that the cadets, thus admitted, should constitute the Arsenal and Magazine Guard, in place of the present one; that the

governor should establish rules for the government of the school, employ one or more teachers, and confer on them such military rank as might be thought advisable, and appoint a Board of Visiters annually, to attend the examinations, inspect the arms, &c., and report to the Legislature; and that the officers and cadets should have the use of the college library, on such terms as the faculty might prescribe, and attend the chemical and other lectures."

"The following is the article of the *Enquirer*, to which we have referred:—

"THE MILITARY INSTITUTE IN RICHMOND.—A question was taken yesterday in the House of Delegates upon the proposition to establish an Institute of Cadets in this city, upon a plan somewhat similar to the corps of cadets at Lexington. After some debate, in which Mr. Rives supported the scheme, and Mr. Daniel opposed it, the house decided against the indefinite postponement, by a majority of seven. And then the question came up, upon the committee to whom it was to be committed. Mr. Daniel proposed to refer it to the armory committee, Mr. Dorman, to the committee on schools and colleges, (of which Mr. Rives is chairman,) with instructions to report a bill, providing for such an improved condition of the present public guard, as to establish a corps of military cadets without pay, and limited to a number not less than sixty, nor more than eighty, who are to be instructed in such a course of education as will qualify them to be competent teachers of our Common Schools. Mr. Dorman's proposition succeeded by a vote of 63 to 38.

"This scheme was suggested by the Education Convention, was opposed in that body, but it was hailed with acclamation, and almost unanimously carried. We are assured by one who mixes much more with our fellow-citizens than we do, that the measure is decidedly popular. Indeed, why should it not be so?" * * *

"We have since met with the following sensible and judicious remarks on the same subject, in the *State Rights Republican* of Richmond,—from the pen, doubtless, of its senior editor, Mr. FISK, one of the most zealous and intelligent advocates of education that we know, —and take great pleasure in appending it.

"THE MILITARY ACADEMY AT THE ARSENAL.—The most important question that has been brought before our Legislature for many years, was up for discussion on Wednesday last. We mean the plan of establishing a corps of cadets at the arsenal in Richmond, to take the place of a hireling soldiery. We believe it outweighs in importance every measure that has been agitated in this State for years. We had a military education, and we know something of the inestimable value of such a system,—its immeasurable superiority over all other systems of the world. If there is any thing for which we would make greater sacrifices than for all things else, it would be to aid in this vitally-important scheme of establishing the contemplated academy at the arsenal in this city. We approve of the plan with the whole soul; the happy consequences that would ensue cannot be enumerated or described. We appeal most earnestly, most respectfully and sincerely, to the members of the General Assembly, not to allow this to become a *party* question, but to pass the bill in an acceptable shape,

and the blessings of thousands will be their rich reward for the glorious deed.' "

Who would exchange the Normal School at LEXINGTON, Mass., for the Military School at LEXINGTON, Va., though the wealth of the Indies were given to boot? Omniscience alone can comprehend the difference in the two generations, which, at the end of twenty-one years, these two systems will usher upon the stage of life.

PUNCTUATION.

Caxton had the merit of introducing the Roman pointing, as used in Italy; and his successor, Pinson, triumphed by domiciliating the Roman letter. The dash, or perpendicular line, thus |, was the only punctuation they used. It was, however, discovered, that "the craft of pointing well, used to make the sentence very light." The more elegant comma supplanted the long, uncouth |; the colon was a refinement, "showing that there is more to come."

But the semicolon was a Latin delicacy, which the obtuse English typographer resisted. So late as 1590, treatises on orthography do not recognize any such innovator. The Bible of 1592, though printed with appropriate accuracy, is without a semicolon; but in 1633, its full rights are established, by Charles Butler's English Grammar. In this chronology of the four points of punctuation, it is evident that Shakspeare could never have used the semicolon,—a circumstance which the profound George Chalmers mourns over, opining that semicolons would often have saved the poet from his commentators.

To show the liability of the human intellect to fall into error, Mr. Byrne, Professor of Mathematic, College for Civil Engineers, London, makes the following statement:—

"Babbage, in speaking of his Table of Logarithms, says, the proofs of the present tables were read three times;—1st, with the marked copy of Callet's logarithms; 2dly, with a copy of Hutton's logarithms, fourth edition, 1804; 3dly, with a copy of Vega's logarithms, folio, 1794. They were now received from the printer, and were again compared with the logarithms of Vega; 5thly, they were read with those of the *Trigonometria Artificialis* of Briggs.

"They were next returned to the printer, and stereotyped, and the proofs from the plates were read; 6thly, with the logarithms of Vega; 7thly, with the whole of the logarithms of Gardiner; 8thly, with the logarithms of Taylor; and, 9thly, by a different set of readers, they were again read with the logarithms of Taylor. After all this care and investigation, I found an error in Mr. Babbage's work not long since."

LEXINGTON NORMAL SCHOOL. The next term of the Lexington Normal School will commence on Wednesday, May 4th.

Lexington, April 15, 1842.

C. PIERCE, Principal.

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